

Kari Spencer. A Content Analyses of North Carolina Public Libraries' Responses to Covid19 via Library Websites and Social Media. A Master's Paper for the M.S. in L.S degree. April, 2021. 53 pages. Advisor: Ronald E. Bergquist

The study analyses the content of Covid19 statements that are provided to users of the North Carolina Public Libraries Systems. The statements are pulled from official websites and social media pages. The research seeks to provide a view of any policy changes/alterations in services by using purposive sampling techniques to look at official statements, resources and updates given by Public Libraries within North Carolina. This includes coding the content of those statements (and other materials), and analyzing for significant themes, commonalities, and divergences. In so doing, the research hopes to provide a much-needed view of state of library resources in NC during the Covid19 pandemic – with may be useful for future research and policies.

Headings:

Public Libraries

Social Media

Covid19

Library Rules and Regulations

A CONTENT ANALYSES OF NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC LIBRARIES' RESPONSES TO
COVID19 VIA LIBRARY WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

by
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Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Approved by

Ronald E. Bergquist

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Introduction

In the context of Public Libraries, disaster preparedness/management is often discussed – but it is not often that it is needed to be put into practice. While many policies can be helpful to both patrons and library staff, one has to consider what disaster-type events may happen, and it can be difficult to prepare properly for every situation. Some situations may not even have policies to begin with, but rather develop them on more of a trial-and-error basis. Beyond the policies themselves, there should also be consideration in how any service changes are presented to the public that interact with the Library system; whether these interactions be on an official website, a social media page, etc. The study in this paper seeks to compare and contrast the content of Covid19 statements that have been provided to users of the North Carolina Public Libraries Systems.

The research seeks to provide a view of any policy changes/alterations in services by using purposive sampling techniques to look at official statements, resources and updates publicly given on digital resources by Public Libraries within North Carolina. The specific resources included are Library websites, as well as social media account for the following: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This includes coding the content of those statements (and other materials), and analyzing for significant themes, commonalities, and divergences.

In doing so, the research hopes to provide a much-needed view of state of library resources in North Carolina during the Covid19 pandemic – which may be useful for

future research and policies. This study does not intend to try and reevaluate resources in the hopes of changing them; it only hopes to show an accurate representation of responses and resources available to the North Carolina Public Library users.

This study examined the content of these digital resources through the following research questions:

1. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted North Carolina public library services for both library staff and users?
2. Are there any similarities in how services are being communicated through library websites, etc.?
3. To what extent are the social media resources used to communicate with patrons?
4. Are there any significant trends in social media content – especially any that change between platforms?

Before delving into the study, here is a small list of terms defined in a specific manner for this research using common knowledge within Library Science.

- **Library websites** – Official websites for a Library, run by people who work for the library system. This is something that most, if not all Library systems have to inform patrons of their services.
- **Social media** - websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. The ones focused on are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

- **Covid19** – a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. Many people also often use this term to refer to the pandemic as an overall, not just the illness itself. This research will see it represented both ways – but most often ~~in regards to~~ in regard to the pandemic.
- **Library services** - Resources and activities provided by **libraries** to address information needs of users also known as patrons). These can include a variety of different services both inside and outside library spaces.
- **Public libraries** - For the use of this content analysis, public libraries are defined as free public institutions that receive some level of public funding from either the city, the county, or the state in which they reside. They do not have to exist within only one county – so regional libraries are also included. Libraries which rely entirely on privately funded resources are not included, and those that are known to require any type of membership fees are not included either.
- **Patron** – A person that uses any of the services offered by the library, whether physical or digital. They do not have to contribute monetarily to be considered a patron.

Literature Review

Strategic Planning/Preparedness

The literature regarding public libraries in times of crisis mainly focuses on events in which the library itself is in a time of distress, and needing to work to preserve or rebuild the collection as a whole. There is also the sentiment of needing to stay open during a time of crises, but it has only been within the last ten years or so that the discussion has shifted to the public library contributing to the community as a source of recovery. Though there are many events that can be used to discuss this concept, the recent/ongoing Coronavirus pandemic presents a unique opportunity to look at this from the perspective of the public library having to change the ways in which it offers services – all for the health/wellness of their staff and patrons.

Another aspect of this pandemic that brings the public library into the forefront is the level of other important events that have been ongoing throughout this ordeal. Some of these events include things like the presidential election, the protests – especially those acknowledging racial injustice, any North Carolina specific events (for the NC public libraries), etc. (Gibson et al., 2020). These events are often highly important in local communities, and libraries should work to serve the community in regard to resources about these events. Beyond that, these events are historical in nature, and therefore they can also influence current service trends and policies that may need change.

Many of these changes in policy can be made in the libraries disaster preparedness plans/policies, or with the libraries strategic plan. The strategic plan is generally used to translate the library's mission statement into attainable goals and objectives. Every library varies in when

they update their strategic plan, but it is often every year to every three years. One of the common ways in which they evaluate and make changes to their plan is through patron feedback – which can be gotten via in person interaction, email, phone calls, accessing the library website, or even the social media pages.

Social Media

This section will start off with a little disclaimer from the ALA “Libraries are under no legal obligation to participate in social media, nor are they required to host public conversations.” Of course, social media can be used as a great source to market to the public, but when there are accounts from which a person is posting content to represent an organization, they have to be conscious of the possible interactions/reactions they might be getting from the public. Public libraries specifically should also be working to try and make their social media accounts extensions of the library itself in that patrons are comfortable with the content, and it is working to serve the community.

According to Pundsack (2019), it is also a good idea for libraries to set up policies and participate in social media with the general concepts of “who, what, when where and why” in mind. These concepts are important in setting professional boundaries so that one is not overworking themselves or their staff, they are keeping library and personal opinion accounts separate, there are maintained policies in place, all platforms used by the library are being utilized to potential, and the library is working to serve its’ intended patrons. While there are many ways to do these things, one suggestion made to ensure patrons have access to a library’s social media is to include it on their official library website. Though a majority of North Carolina public libraries do this, there are a few that do not link any of their accounts, as well as a number that forget to include one of their social media accounts on their website – only for patrons to be able to find it either by cross-postings, or by Google searching.

Another way to ensure that library content is accessible for patrons on social media is to pay attention to any trends in popularity among the platforms. Are there any that show significant patron interaction in comparison to others? What kind of content seems to work best on what platform, etc.? As a common theme seen by a partnered-study between TechSoup and WebJunction, here are the top three social media platforms ranked by library usage: 1. Facebook, 2. Twitter, 3. Instagram. This is not to say that libraries should disregard certain mainstream platforms like Instagram. Instead, they should work on how to market themselves in a way that is conducive to the formatting of that platform.

Methodology

Sample Selection

Since the researcher has been raised in the state of North Carolina, it makes sense to limit the sample to this state; especially because of the researcher's level of familiarity with a few of the library systems. The familiarity with some of these systems involves the researcher having participated in the libraries as a patron, a volunteer, or a member of staff. According to the 2019-2020 Quick reports dashboard provided by State library of North Carolina (SLNC), there are 83 public library systems alone – many of which have multiple locations/service points. Out of the 83 systems, 40 were selected for this study; and they were chosen if they met the following criteria.

- The NC Public Libraries were chosen by using one library – or one library system - from each county. Counties were chosen in order of population to try and account for the amount of patrons that could be served by these library systems; originally they were to be picked based on previous library data of patron counts/service interactions, but it was decided that this would not work for the following reasons:
 1. Library systems do not have a uniformly decided way on counting patron data/interaction
 2. This would not account for any individuals who started using the library services through social media means – or those that were forced to stop using the services due to any digital divide.

- The original statement regarding library closure on March 16 (or a few days after depending on when the library posted) was easily found in a simple Google search. The Library system must also have a minimum of a Facebook account; though having Instagram and Twitter accounts as well would be ideal, they will not be required.

Counties that use the same regional system can be considered as separate entities for this study if they lead to separate social media sites. For example: A regional system includes libraries in both counties A and B, they share the same base library site – but the library in county A has a different Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter from the library in county B. This will lead to an acknowledgement that other counties can use those services, but that they also house libraries within them. For regional systems represented by one county only - the other counties are visually represented in the study. This was done in a way that shows they are linked to other counties without specifying what regional systems in which they are included. Regional libraries that just have the same accounts for everything are regarded as one entity, and more than 40 counties are considered fully represented – but still only 40 library systems. In the same vein, if a county library system has more than one location to reference back to for social media – the most popular location within that system was chosen as a representative, or the system as a whole is considered represented in lack of multiple location accounts. County systems have been referenced over city systems since they are usually considered to serve more patrons with the presence of multiple locations, but in case of any lack of information regarding Covid19, the city system takes precedence over the county.

Data Collection

The data collection for this study took place from January 10th – February 20th, 2021. The data is comprised of publicly posted information from Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Library websites/government pages, and news articles. It was originally intended that government pages

and news articles not be used in this study – but due to the nature in which many of the North Carolina Public Library websites chose to update information in regard to statements, it became necessary. All data found was posted between the dates of March 16th 2020 – January 15th 2021. Data collection itself consisted of filling useful information into table templates, taking screenshots that represent different types of posts, and taking notes, etc.

The first step taken in data collection was to create a few checklists, seeing which libraries would best fit for the purpose of the study. The first checklist makes note of where each initial statement regarding Covid19 is found; the second checklist makes note of which social media accounts the libraries use out of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The second step taken was gathering the URL's for these pages/accounts and organizing them into files under the county name that houses the library system/specific library. The Final step was collecting posts from these sites that has information about Covid19 and/or the changes in library service due to Covid19.

The collected data includes posts from any of the account types listed above. It also makes a general note of where the most Library to patron interaction takes place; whether this be by reactions to posts, or comments – however, this data was not counted numerically/by percentage, and is only referenced in general terms to indicate what trends of communication might be. There are a few limitations that need to be considered as well; this study did not look at all public library systems in North Carolina, instead it roughly looks at half of them. Another limitation is the fact that is entirely public facing data, there is no looking at the “Back-end” or web-development point of view that informs exactly how many views these websites/accounts/posts are getting; only likes, comments, and shares are visible.

Results

The Overall Response

The use of websites to share information is not an uncommon concept – however most people take information from social media “with a grain of salt”. That is to say that information on social media pages is not often viewed in the same levels of professionalism and accuracy as it would be if it came from somewhere else, like an organization’s website or the news. Even some professional resource are disregarded because of overall public perception and knowledge – these viewpoints can be pushed even further if these resources are not producing any specialized/digitized content within certain timeframes. So what happens to any of the professional or informational resources that have not necessarily reached their full potential on being digitized resources during events like the Coronavirus pandemic? Well to answer that for public libraries in the state of North Carolina, it could be said that they have adapted well in a short turnaround time. With little-to-no preparation for this exact event, the public libraries have shifted many resources online, and have been able to continually update their patrons throughout the Covid19 pandemic in a safe and timely manner.

The research shows where NC Public Libraries are updating their patrons on differences in services due to Covid19, both on library websites and social media. It also shows where most public online interactions between libraries and their patrons can be found – these interactions include concepts of things similar to liking and/or reacting to posts, sharing, commenting, etc.

The Initial and Updating Responses from Library Websites

In March of 2020, a Government mandate passed, which caused the closure of public libraries in the state of North Carolina. Many libraries posted their information on their **websites, government pages, and even in news resources**. Some Libraries did not post the initial update on their own website, nor did they keep as a reference for time passing – but the following libraries/library systems were considered because this information was easy to find with a simple google search.

Many of the NC public libraries posted similar – if not entirely identical initial statements ~~in regards to~~ in regard to the government mandate. Some did have differences in mentioning that they were closing locations, while some also made sure to mention services offered outside of their library locations were temporarily stopped as well.

In regard to continually updating on these websites, it is interesting to see that this is done in what seems to be one of two ways. The first way catalogues the continuing updates either on the library site, or on the overall county government site; which is still accessible from the library website itself. The second way that these sites are updated makes it so that the public can only find the most recent service changes/updates on the website. If several changes for the Covid19 policies are simultaneous then the individual libraries decide if this information is presented on one page, or spread throughout their website. There are many ways of doing this, including putting banners on main sites that use guiding imagery, as well as also having full Covid19 policies under their own tab/tier of the website.

Below are a couple of examples of the different initial closing statements:

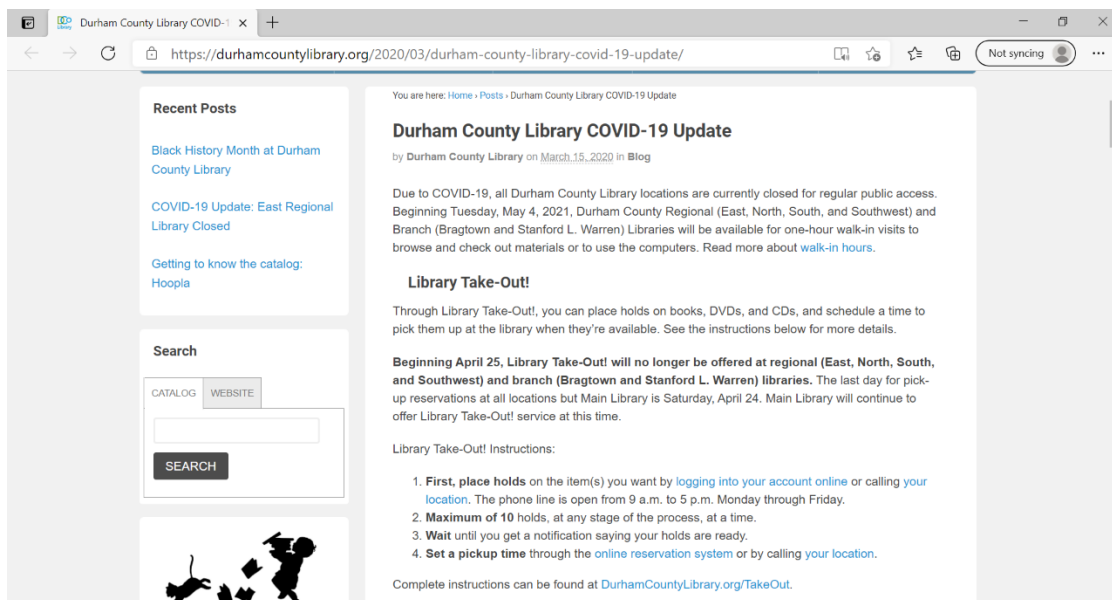


Figure 1 Durham County Public Library (DCPL) Website

This Archived Blog post in the DCPL shows the initial statement posted to their website. Though it is cut off due to space in this screenshot, there are blog updates and other important information below this post, as well as patron questions.



Figure 2 Johnston County Government Website Page

The initial posting of this exact statement was on both the library section of the Johnston County government website, and the Johnston County public library website itself. It was updated/removed from the library website, but remained archived in the government website.

Following are a couple of examples that show how library websites utilize their space for ongoing updates:

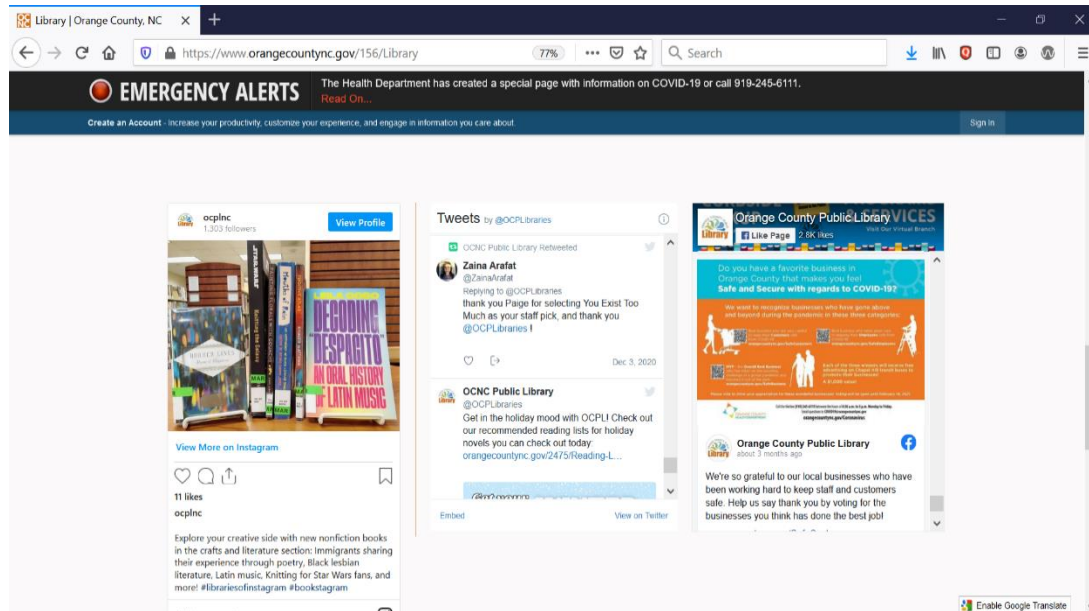


Figure 3 Orange County Public Library website homepage

If you scroll down past the banners that also hold some Covid19 information, you can see some of the continually updating content from their social media accounts.

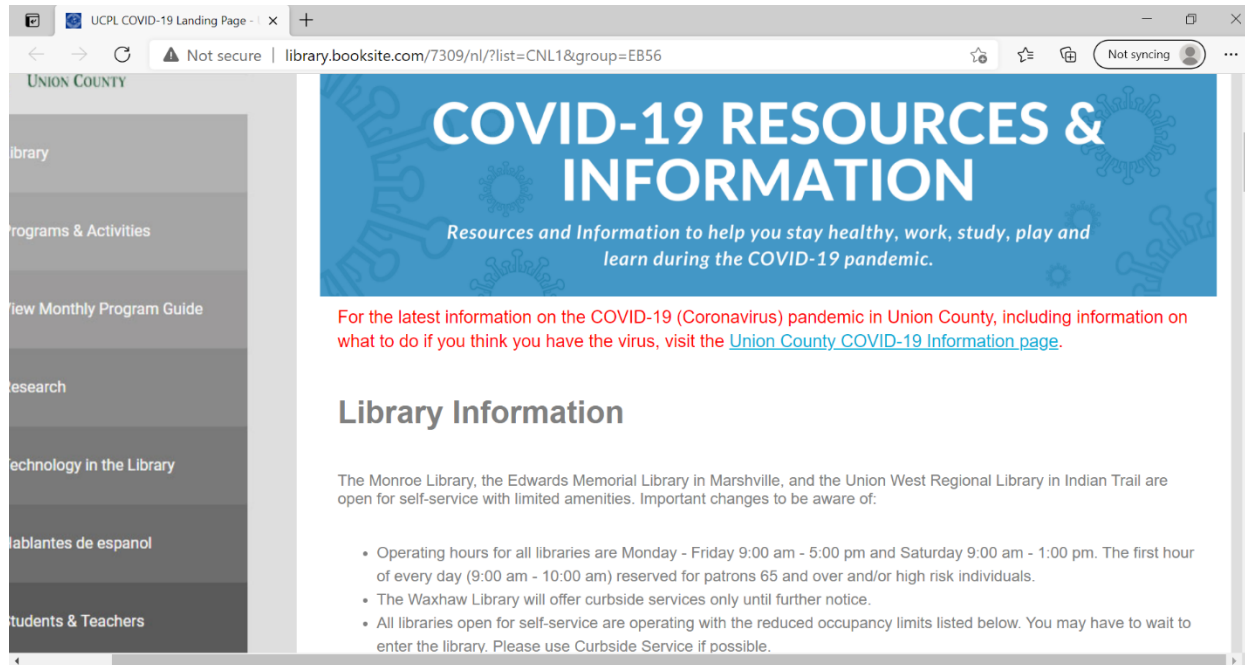


Figure 4 Union County Public Library website, Covid19/Library Information

This website shows a separate page regarding important information in library hours, closure, occupancy and mask requirements, etc. It also offers a link to the entire Union County information page for Covid19 up at the top.

Social Media Content Types and Interactions.

All public library social media platforms include different kinds of updates ~~in regards to~~ [in regard to](#) Covid19 and the services they are offering, etc. Some updates include things beyond library services – like having updates on county or city Covid19 case counts. Some posts even work to regard the pandemic without mentioning it, for example: libraries posting story-time videos for young children weekly because their locations are not open to the public.

There are also posts considered completely normal for these social media sites; they are things along the lines of what was common to post to these accounts pre-Covid19. Examples of these posts are as follows; highlighting library collections, informing patrons of new/incoming items, information on either library or local events, historical posts that encourage patrons to research more, etc. These have nothing to do with the pandemic at all, and bring familiarity to the social media pages during the needed change of services. These posts can be positive for the mental health of patrons by giving them a sense of normalcy with any needed shifts/changes in services, thereby helping to ease the public through the overall transition.

All of this is to say that you can categorize the findings in North Carolina Public Library social media posts into nine categories (with or without the posts regarding Covid19). These categories are:

1. **Information about the community/etc.** This information has to do with things such as the Covid19 case count, business closures/openings, etc.
2. **Collections/resources/reference materials.** Posts that highlight different aspects of the libraries collections/resources that are available for patrons to use in some format – whether physical or digital. These collections/resources often have to do with current events in a different context – like politics.

3. **Historical content.** Usually presented as historic pictures/facts from within the local community. Can also include non-local resources.
4. **Current events (specifically library involved).** Updating patrons on any events the library is hosting and/or events where they are attending/partnering with other organizations.
5. **Library staff/etc.** Usually highlights specific staff members. Also includes posts that mention high-level library meetings, or staff trainings, etc.
6. **General entertainment.** Specifically in relation to Covid19 limiting things like travel/sightseeing/etc. Offers patrons ways to experience things in life they would otherwise be unable to do.
7. **Pandemic preparedness.** Direct tips for the pandemic. They can be as widespread as mask-making templates, or as localized as letting patrons know what grocery store hours are, and if there are certain items available, etc.
8. **Physical library service updates.** Specifically ~~in regards to~~ in regard to things like mobile pickup for books, or phased reopening plans.
9. **Other/unsorted.** Posts that do not necessarily fit into any of the above categories, but instead skirt around them in some way.

The following sections will show direct content examples of these nine categories from different NC public library social media pages. Some social media have all categories represented, but other do not due to the formatting of the sites, or posting methods of the social media managers. In addition to this, some examples of patron interaction may be highlighted within these posts. That could include things like reacting to a post, sharing, or commenting/responding to previous comments.

Facebook Content

Facebook is where we are able to see a majority of interaction between public libraries and their patrons. This may be due to the varied types of both posts and content that many library Facebook accounts offers patrons, instead of the more singular structured post types seen across other platforms. Facebook accounts are generally more active as well, many with multiple posts daily, and more library responses to patron comments.

Many counties had Covid19 information interspersed well with other content, but there a few examples of counties that had more than the average amount of Covid19 posts. One such county is Rutherford – the Facebook account alone had 94 posts directly regarding Covid19 and its effect on changing library services, community cases information, etc. These 94 posts do not include any virtual story-time readings that started due to Covid19 – but it does include the original announcement post stating that they would be hosting virtual story-times.

Examples of content:

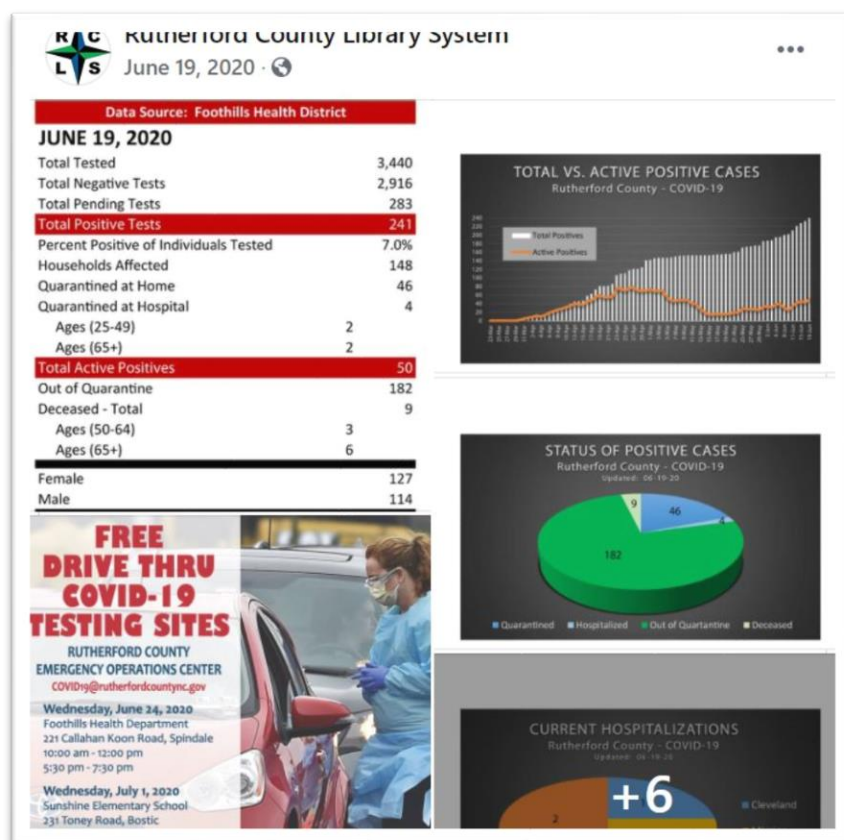


Figure 5 Facebook Information about the community, etc.

Rutherford County Facebook Post – this post is something that was continuously re-uploaded throughout the pandemic to give residents of Rutherford county updated statistics/news regarding Covid19. The visuals from post-to-post are almost entirely identical, only the information on them changes throughout time. This post was found to be updated a total of 11 times.



Figure 6 Facebook Collections/Resources/Reference Materials

Wake County Public library has many posts that would be useful specifically in regard to Covid19 and other categories of social media, however this post shows a subtle way of acknowledging both Covid19, and other current events. It is well-known that the year of 2020 had many instances of unrest in regard to racial inequality – and this post highlighting a collection targeted towards that subject material in a digital manner shows that Wake was thinking of how best to serve their community during this time.

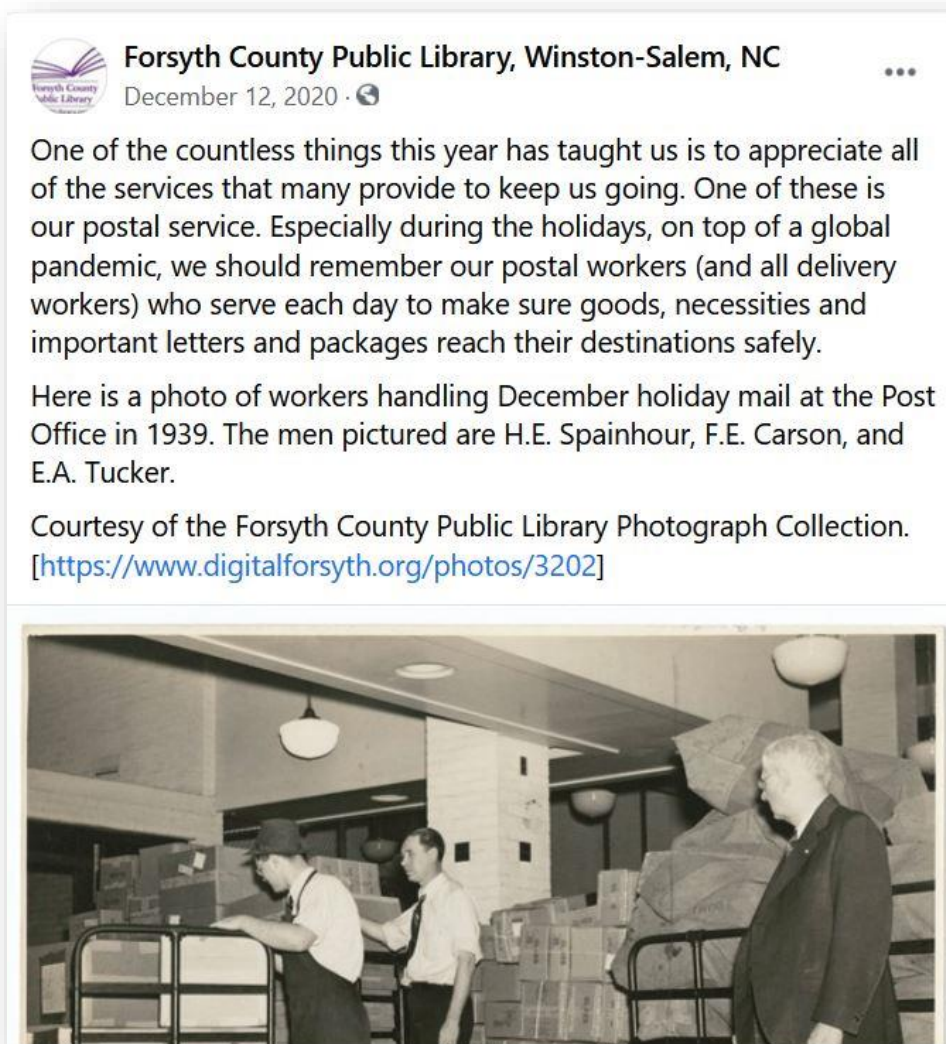
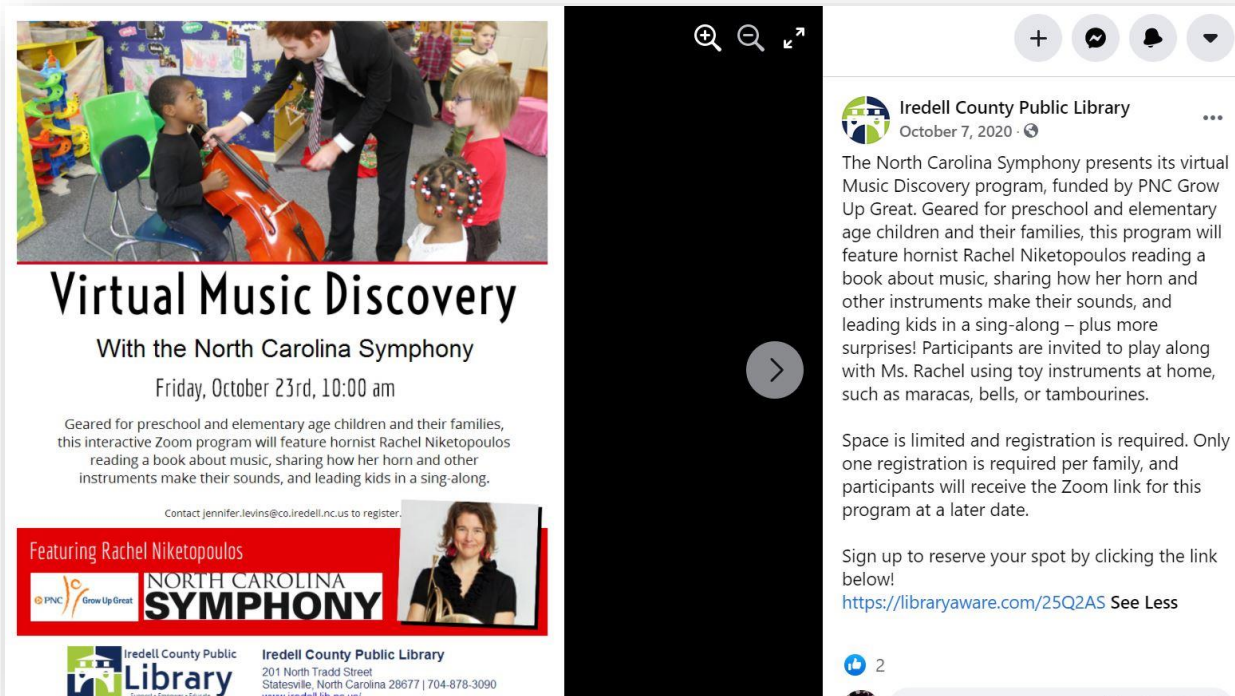


Figure 7 Facebook Historical Posts

The Forsyth County Public Library account has a couple of different historical posts to pull from, which work as both markers for remembrance, and to highlight current positions/activities/etc. This post in particular helps to highlight the importance of the postal service during busy times, especially in the middle of a pandemic.



The image shows a Facebook post from the Iredell County Public Library. The post features a promotional graphic for a 'Virtual Music Discovery' event. The graphic includes a photo of a man playing a double bass to a group of children. The text on the graphic reads: 'Virtual Music Discovery With the North Carolina Symphony', 'Friday, October 23rd, 10:00 am', and describes the program as an interactive Zoom session for preschool and elementary children. It mentions that the program will feature hornist Rachel Niketopoulos reading a book about music, sharing how her horn and other instruments make their sounds, and leading kids in a sing-along. The graphic also includes logos for PNC Grow Up Great and the North Carolina Symphony, and contact information for the Iredell County Public Library.

Virtual Music Discovery
With the North Carolina Symphony
Friday, October 23rd, 10:00 am

Geared for preschool and elementary age children and their families, this interactive Zoom program will feature hornist Rachel Niketopoulos reading a book about music, sharing how her horn and other instruments make their sounds, and leading kids in a sing-along.

Contact jennifer.lewins@co.iredell.nc.us to register.

Featuring Rachel Niketopoulos

NORTH CAROLINA SYMPHONY

Iredell County Public Library
201 North Tradd Street
Statesville, North Carolina 28677 | 704-878-3090
www.iredell.lib.nc.us/

Iredell County Public Library
October 7, 2020

The North Carolina Symphony presents its virtual Music Discovery program, funded by PNC Grow Up Great. Geared for preschool and elementary age children and their families, this program will feature hornist Rachel Niketopoulos reading a book about music, sharing how her horn and other instruments make their sounds, and leading kids in a sing-along – plus more surprises! Participants are invited to play along with Ms. Rachel using toy instruments at home, such as maracas, bells, or tambourines.

Space is limited and registration is required. Only one registration is required per family, and participants will receive the Zoom link for this program at a later date.

Sign up to reserve your spot by clicking the link below!
<https://libraryaware.com/25Q2AS> See Less

2

Figure 8 Facebook Current Events

The Iredell County Public library page posted this great example of a current event that had an association with the library. The inclusion of fun events for kids during the time of the pandemic is not uncommon - but many were large-scale streaming events on Facebook, or pre-recorded and posted on accounts to be viewed later. This event shows exactly how the library advertises on their social media page for events that require a sign-up, and even offers a link for people to follow.

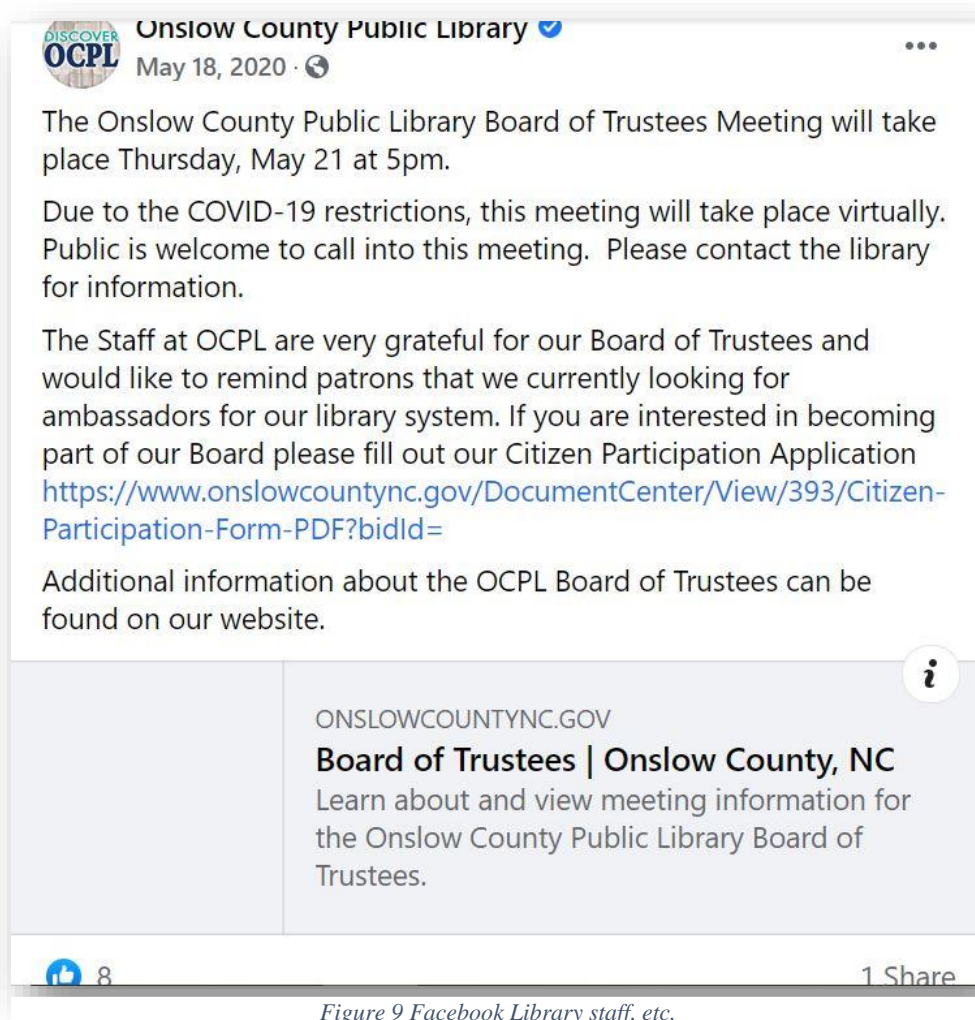


Figure 9 Facebook Library staff, etc.

The Onslow County Public Library system has a few posts that highlight specific staff members and the services they are helping to provide. This post, however, shows the library looking out for more patron involvement in the form of members on their Board of Trustees and ambassadors for their library system.



Figure 10 Facebook General Entertainment

An example from Wilkes County Public Library system that highlights libraries and travel. This virtual tour is a fun way to experience other places without worrying about travel restrictions caused by the pandemic.

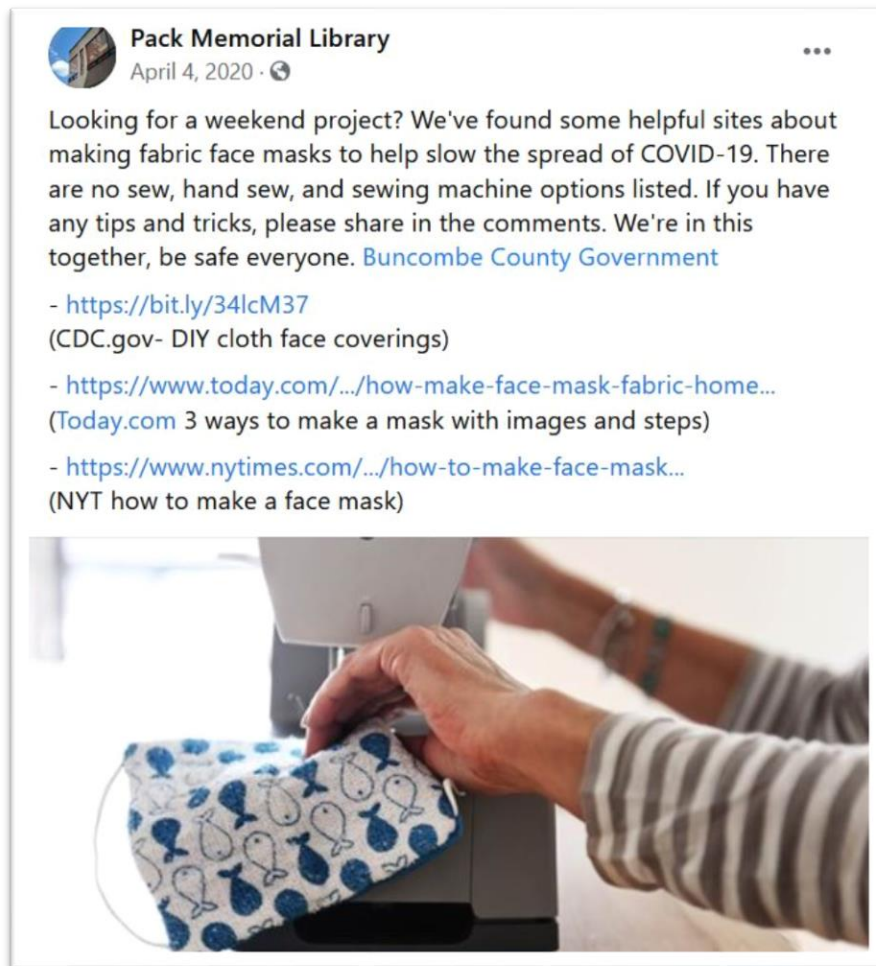


Figure 11 Facebook Pandemic Preparedness

Early on in the pandemic, Pack Memorial Library (Buncombe County) posted several things that patrons could do to help themselves and their local community – like this specific post with a few different links on guidelines for safety and how to make reusable cloth masks.



Figure 12 Facebook Other/Unsorted

This figure shows a post from the New Hanover Public Library system which displays something not quite categorized. The post does have tips on helping with Covid19 stress, but it is neither in the direct categories of pandemic preparedness, or entertainment.

Instagram Content

While Instagram holds important information and patron interaction, it is the least utilized social media platform of the three looked at in this study. This could be due to the limited style of posting that Instagram viewers often look for; attention grabbing imagery without a large amount of words. Sometimes for library content, words are a necessity, and this could be a contributing factor.

But is it so simple as to say the fault is content not matching with the platform's formatting/aesthetic, or are other contributing factors? Another considerable issue that library accounts could encounter on Instagram is their lack of using the service in a way that markets them to spaces beyond their current followers/patrons. One way of doing this is to include hashtags in posts, especially because of how they are used in this platform – to put it simply, the popularity of hashtags can help to generate more views..

The main trends in Instagram posting from libraries in the time of this study are as follows; information highlighting collection resources, the library as a whole, and pandemic preparedness. There are instances of posts within other categories, however since the focus is mostly on these areas, they will be highlighted in the examples that follow:



Figure 13 Instagram Information about the community, etc.

The Wayne County public library shared this Instagram post onto their account. This is community information especially helpful for families/children that depend on school lunches to be fed. This post also showcases a great usage of hashtags, which can help to make sure the post reaches the intended audience.



Figure 14 Instagram Collections/resources/reference materials

Cabarrus County public library uses their Instagram to highlight many things about their book collections, and services. This post shows the highlighting of mindfulness type books that can be found with the library's partnership with hoopla.



Figure 15 Instagram Current events (specifically library involved)

Harnett County public library uses this post to highlight take-home crafting events for kids/families. It also shows a great way of communicating limitations and contact information.



Figure 16 Instagram Library staff, etc.

This post from the Caldwell County public library is a great example of highlighting specific members of staff. It is a very heartfelt post, and obviously gained a large amount of likes (41 likes), however the caption is longer than what you might see in many other posts for this platform.



Figure 17 Instagram Pandemic preparedness

While many resources for pandemic preparedness focus on how a person can prepare themselves at home, and what they need to buy – this post on the Carteret County public library page highlights a free mask giveaway for residents.



Figure 18 Instagram Physical library service updates

This post from the Alamance County Public Libraries (ACPL) account details out curbside service. It also shows great interaction between the library and patrons through comments and likes – though the reply from ACPL is cut-off in this screenshot.

Twitter Content

Twitter accounts are seen as a hit-or-miss in their level of posting and interaction for public libraries. Some accounts use things like cross-posting between their Facebook and Twitter, some post half of the information from other accounts, and some have little-to-no information about Covid19 – or anything at all. . If a Twitter account for a library is run correctly, it could have the potential to gain as much traction/popularity as a Facebook account, especially because the limited viewing expectations seen on Instagram do not apply. It is also important to note that like Instagram, Twitter puts some importance on the use of hashtags – using these can gain more interaction from patrons, and more overall visibility for your post.

Beyond the similarities in freedoms and limitations between twitter and other social media platforms, Twitter has an interesting limitation for posts. There is a character count on anything you tweet, and when you include media like photos/videos/gifs the character count changes. This limitation may lead to posts that use attention-grabbing statements, but it can also cause the libraries to omit information, or it can lead to the Twitter account consisting of only entertaining information.

Much like the trends seen in Instagram, Twitter highlights the following; collection resources, the library as a whole, and pandemic preparedness. This is not to say the other content types do not exist in the context of Twitter, just that they are the most common types of posts seen.

These overall content types will be highlighted in the examples on the following pages:



Figure 19 Twitter Collections/resources/reference materials

This tweet from the Chatham County public libraries shows an ongoing collection highlight. On Fridays throughout the pandemic, they tweet about one eBook to bring the digital collection to the attention of patrons.



Figure 20 Twitter Current events (specifically library involved)

This tweet from Sheppard Memorial Library (Pitt County) treads the lines from focusing on historical content and current events. Since it is a workshop through the library, and not just a reference to a service, it fits within the category of current events.

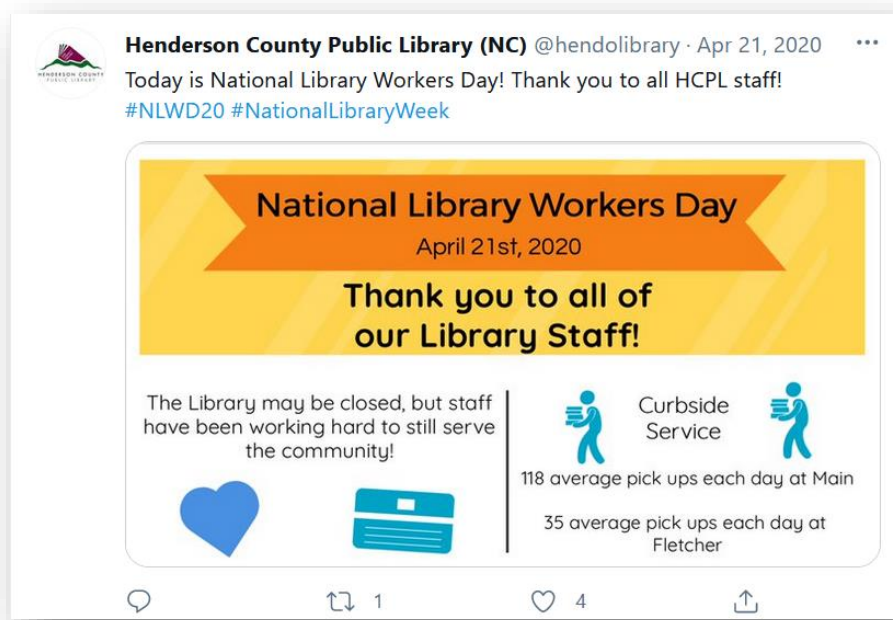


Figure 21 Twitter Library staff/etc.

This tweet from the Henderson County public library was made during National Library Week. It details information about the curbside service and the fact that the physical library is closed, all while giving thanks to the library staff.



Figure 22 Twitter General entertainment

This post was made to entertain the patrons of the New Bern Library in Craven County. It allows for exploration and creativity without having to worry about any travel limitations due to Covid19.



Figure 23 Twitter Pandemic preparedness

Rockingham County public library had more than one way of pandemic preparedness on their Twitter profile. This was an interesting version – helping to prepare patrons on how to deal with scams that target Covid19 vaccination information.



Figure 24 Twitter Physical Library Services Update

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library has a very active Twitter account, however a majority of tweet during the pandemic have focused on entertaining patrons and letting them know about upcoming events. This Tweet in particular displays one of the few tweets that is basically a direct link to Covid19 – even without mentioning the pandemic in name, or using any Covid19 related hashtags.

Conclusion

This content analysis study shows there was a quick turn-around time and/or adjustment from both the public libraries of North Carolina, and the patrons. These results may have led to conclusions regarding the a considerable need for future research, and policy changes – however this could be due to the fact that the data was similar in nature, and was caused by a health-crisis situation that many libraries were unprepared for initially. Thankfully, the data also shows that the North Carolina public libraries have the potential to work under this new kind of crisis while focusing more on community needs, and less on library needs. Subsequent and/or similar research should have the potential to highlight the need to delve into other areas of emergency management/policies in the public library system. This way, many libraries would be better prepared should a similar situation happen in the future, and the way that services have been somewhat redefined throughout this event can be noted.

While it is always the hope of the library system that patrons reach out in times of crisis, this may not always be the case. This study highlights instances in while the public are viewing and interacting with the library - but it does not show whether or not any libraries contact their patrons in other manners, such as email or via phone. The library websites and social media have great potential to serve patrons, especially in terms of needed digital service during a pandemic; but more could be done to communicate these services to library patrons. Some library websites could improve on linking their social media in more visible/accessible areas – or at all. These services are continually growing sources of information for patrons and local resources, and public libraries should continue to use them as a way to connect with their community.

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Appendix B:

This Table details where the initial statements regarding Covid19 were found for this study.

- Yes means that is where the resources were found when the initial search was conducted.
- N/A means not applicable – it acknowledges that Covid19 statements may have existed/may exist in those locations, but were not there at the time of research.

COUNTY NAME	LIBRARY WEBSITE/ GOVERNMENT SITE	SOCIAL MEDIA	NEWS/OTHER
Alamance	Yes	Yes	N/A
Brunswick	Yes	N/A	Yes
Buncombe	Yes	Yes	N/A
Burke	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cabarrus	Yes	N/A	Yes
Caldwell	Yes	N/A	Yes
Carteret	Yes	N/A	Yes
Catawba	Yes	N/A	N/A
Chatham	Yes	N/A	Yes
Cleveland	Yes	N/A	Yes
Craven	Yes	N/A	N/A
Cumberland	Yes	N/A	N/A
Davidson	Yes	N/A	Yes
Durham	Yes	N/A	Yes
Forsyth	N/A	N/A	Yes
Franklin	Yes	N/A	N/A
Gaston	Yes	Yes	N/A
Guilford	Yes	N/A	N/A
Harnett	Yes	N/A	Yes
Henderson	Yes	N/A	Yes
Iredell	Yes	N/A	N/A
Johnston	Yes	N/A	Yes
Lincoln	Yes	N/A	Yes
Mecklenburg	Yes	N/A	N/A
Moore	Yes	N/A	Yes
Nash	Yes	Yes	N/A
New Hanover	Yes	N/A	Yes
Onslow	Yes	N/A	Yes
Orange	Yes	N/A	Yes
Pitt	Yes	N/A	N/A
Randolph	Yes	N/A	Yes
Robeson	Yes	N/A	N/A

COUNTY NAME	LIBRARY WEBSITE/ GOVERNMENT SITE	SOCIAL MEDIA	NEWS/OTHER
Rockingham	Yes	N/A	Yes
Rowan	Yes	N/A	Yes
Rutherford	Yes	N/A	Yes
Surry	Yes	N/A	N/A
Union	Yes	N/A	N/A
Wake	Yes	N/A	Yes
Wayne	Yes	N/A	Yes
Wilkes	N/A	Yes	Yes

Appendix C:

This Table details what social media platforms are found in the chosen library system for each county.

- Yes means that the account was found – whether through a link posted on the library website, or through searching for it individually.
- N/A means not applicable – in the sense that those accounts may exist, but were either unable to be found, or did not exist at the time of research.

COUNTY NAME	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	TWITTER
Alamance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Brunswick	Yes	N/A	N/A
Buncombe	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burke	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cabarrus	Yes	Yes	N/A
Caldwell	Yes	Yes	N/A
Carteret	Yes	Yes	N/A
Catawba	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chatham	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cleveland	Yes	Yes	Yes
Craven	Yes	N/A	Yes
Cumberland	Yes	Yes	Yes
Davidson	Yes	Yes	Yes
Durham	Yes	Yes	Yes
Forsyth	Yes	Yes	Yes
Franklin	Yes	N/A	N/A
Gaston	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guilford	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harnett	Yes	Yes	N/A
Henderson	Yes	N/A	Yes
Iredell	Yes	Yes	Yes
Johnston	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lincoln	Yes	N/A	N/A
Mecklenburg	Yes	Yes	Yes
Moore	Yes	Yes	N/A
Nash	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Hanover	Yes	Yes	Yes
Onslow	Yes	Yes	Yes

COUNTY NAME	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	TWITTER
Orange	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pitt	Yes	N/A	Yes
Randolph	Yes	Yes	Yes
Robeson	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rockingham	Yes	N/A	Yes
Rowan	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rutherford	Yes	Yes	Yes
Surry	Yes	Yes	Yes
Union	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wake	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wayne	Yes	Yes	N/A
Wilkes	Yes	Yes	Yes